



Charles Wilson Peale.  
James Sharpless.  
Gilbert Stuart.

Unidentified.  
Gilbert Stuart.  
"Le Brun" (French painting).

Charles Wilson Peale.  
James Sharpless.  
Edward Savage.

WASHINGTON AS HE WAS PAINTED BY VARIOUS ARTISTS.

BORN FEBRUARY 22, 1732; DIED DECEMBER 14, 1799.

## DARK DAYS INDEED.

OUTNUMBERED BY FOES, CRITICISED BY FRIENDS AND YET RESOLUTE.

From the Evacuation of Brooklyn to the Historic Night on the Delaware, Washington Shed Many Tears, but Never Despaired.

After the first misfortune of his career in the Revolution—the loss of Brooklyn—Washington established his headquarters at Kingsbridge, but his force was so small that he found the enemy closing in upon him from every side. Congress then, by vote, left the fate of the city in the hands of Washington, and he called a council of war, at which it was decided that the evacuation of the city was necessary, and the movement was begun not a moment too soon. On the retreat several of the companies of troops were thrown into a panic by the cannonade from the ships of war, and showed the most shameful cowardice. Washington was disgusted with them and almost in despair. "Are these the men," he exclaimed vehemently, "with whom I am to defend America?"

However, he soon regained his calm. The city was finally abandoned so rapidly that the most of the heavy cannon and a considerable amount of stores were left behind. It was a terrible day—hot, sultry and oppressive. The confusion was terrible and the suffering intense.



COLONEL HENRY LEE.

The army was "encumbered with women and children tottering along, moaning, crying, faint, thirsty, exhausted and in unutterable woe." Colonel Humphreys wrote:

"I had frequent opportunity that day of beholding Washington issuing orders, encouraging the troops, flying on his horse covered with foam wherever his presence was most necessary. Without his extraordinary exertions the guard must have been inevitably lost, and it is possible the entire corps would have been cut in pieces."

Washington settled upon the upper part of Manhattan island and established a fortified camp. About a mile below him the British line began and extended until backed by the fleet below. Here he remained, fighting several small battles with varying success, until it became clear to him that this position was no longer tenable, and he retired in good order with his troops to the mainland and fortified a camp on White Plains. Several skirmishes took place, with the result of teaching the British that they should use caution in approaching the Americans, of whom one officer wrote:

"The rebel army is in so wretched a condition as to clothing and accoutrements that I believe no nation ever saw such a set of tatterdemalions. There are few coats among them but such as

are out at elbows, and in a whole regiment there is scarce a pair of breeches. Judge, then, how they must be pinched by a winter's campaign. We who are warmly clothed and well equipped already feel it severely, for it is even now much colder than I ever felt it in England." This was in the latter part of October, and a battle had just taken place which lasted several hours without any decisive result except a loss of about 400 on each side.

Judging, therefore, from the difference in the conditions of the armies, it is clear that Washington was by far the better general, since under such fearful odds he could hold his own and inspire respect in a commander like General Howe. The next morning after this battle Howe withdrew, instead of advancing upon Washington. The latter then retired on the night of the 31st to the rocky hills near Northcastle and again intrenched himself, but the proud British general had to curb his pride and refrain from attacking this tattered army.

At midnight of the 4th of November, Howe commenced withdrawing his forces, as though in retreat, and soon they disappeared from White Plains, but it was with the intention of attacking Fort Mifflin, and on the 15th he sent a summons to surrender, accompanied with a barbaric threat. Washington hastened to the beleaguered fortress, which he reached in the cold gloom of a November evening, but his utmost endeavors could not withstand the force of numbers, and Colonel Magaw was forced to capitulate. There were but 3,000 men, only 1,000 of whom could get into the fort, the rest being stationed at the outposts. Four simultaneous attacks were made, and the assault was a series of complicated battles, some two miles and a half distant and some within cannon shot. The redoubts were captured and the retreating troops so crowded the fort that the men could scarcely move about.

The British could throw in a rain of shells and balls and capitulation could not be avoided. Washington stood upon an eminence near and saw the American flag fall and the British flag rise in its place. It was at this occasion that he wept over the merciless slaughter of the young soldiers. Before this he had recommended, though not ordered, that the fort should be evacuated and the men and stores be removed to a place of safety, but some of his more sanguine generals were confident that they could hold the place. Deep as was his grief, he did not reproach them. The captives, numbering 2,818, were marched off at night to the awful prison hulks of New York, where their fate was worse than that of those whose blood had dyed the ground around Fort Mifflin.

Washington now removed the most of his army across the Hudson into New Jersey that he might seek refuge for them among the highlands, and New York was abandoned to the enemy.

ENEMIES AND DETRACTORS. It is the fate of the eminent to arouse the enmity and jealousy of smaller minds, and Washington was by no means exempt.

He had no money, his soldiers were in need of everything, ammunition was scarce and he was, on the other hand, obliged to represent his force as far larger than it was to let the belief exist that all his starving and freezing men were comfortably provided for in winter quarters, so as to mislead the enemy, and thus he was blamed for inactivity when to act would have been to expose his weakness and ruin his only hopes, which were to harass the enemy and perhaps manage to gain some decisive benefit by strategy, which he eventually did.

He kept a cold, impassable manner

through it all, but that the wound was deep was evinced by his letters to his brother Augustine and others during that sad period.

DIFFICULTIES AND DANGERS. When danger was the greatest and difficulties the most formidable the power of Washington's gifts shone brightest, and out of what would have been overwhelming defeat to another he wrested success. Hampered and crippled as he was in "the Jerseys," with every necessity a crying one, he managed by his skill, courage and strong de-



GENERAL CORNWALLIS.

termination to carry out plans that in their results were little less than miracles.

Lee had been taken prisoner in a ridiculous manner and Fort Lee had been abandoned to its fate as a corps of 6,000 of Cornwallis's best men had made their appearance on the Jersey shore, and the soldiers from Fort Lee, about 3,000 in number, were at Hackensack without tents or baggage and greatly disheartened. It was clear to Washington that the British were aiming at the capture of Philadelphia, and to prevent that disaster he gathered as many of his suffering troops as possible at Brunswick. And all this time there was a perpetual clamor of indignation against him on account of his continued retreat.

It would have been the act of a madman to follow any other course then. There were, on the other hand, friends and others who appreciated the grandeur of Washington and understood his struggle, but the same motives that kept him silent kept them silent too.

Washington, with his feeble, disheartened band, lingered in a state of fearful destitution at Brunswick until the 1st of December. The enemy in solid columns were marching proudly through the country with infantry, artillery and cavalry, impressing horses, wagons, sheep, cattle and everything which could aid to the comfort of his warmly clad and well fed hosts.

Irving says: "The people of New Jersey beheld the commander in chief retreating through their country with a handful of men, weary and way worn, dispirited, without tents, without clothing, many of them, barefooted, exposed to wintry weather, and driven from post to post by a well clad, triumphant force, tricked out in all the glittering bravery of war."

"The chill winds of winter were moaning over the fields and ice was beginning to clog the swollen streams. About 1,200 men were stationed at Princeton to watch the movements of the enemy. On the 2d this harassed army reached Trenton. In that dark hour, when all hearts failed, Washington still remained undaunted. He wrote to General Mercer: 'We must retire to Augusta county, in Virginia. Numbers will repair to us for safety. We will try a predatory war. If overpowered we must cross the Alleghenies.'"

In these hours of despondency and

dismay Admiral Howe and his brother, the general, on the 30th of November, issued a proclamation offering pardon to all who would disband and return to their homes. Many of those who had property to lose complied with these terms. On the 2d of December the British reported that "Washington was seen retreating with two brigades to Trenton, where they talk of resisting. But such a panic has seized the rebels that no part of the Jerseys will hold them, and I doubt whether Philadelphia itself will stop their career. Congress has lost authority; they are in such consternation that they know not what to do."

And all this time Lee was loitering at Morristown with about 4,000 men, until the 12th, when, fortunately for the good of his country, he was captured and carried to Brunswick.

Washington combined in his character to an astonishing degree courage and prudence. Is it doubtful whether there was another man on the continent who could have conducted his retreat through the Jerseys. With these few wretched, suffering, almost naked men he retreated more than a hundred miles before a powerful foe flushed with victory and strengthened with abundance. He baffled all their endeavors to cut him off, and preserved all his field pieces, ammunition and nearly all his stores. There was a grandeur in his achievements that far surpassed any ordinary victory. At this juncture congress invested him with almost dictatorial authority, and General Sullivan hastened to join him with Lee's destitute troops.

Washington then crossed the Delaware, destroyed the bridges and seized all the boats for a distance of seventy miles up and down the river. These he either destroyed or placed under guard on the west bank. Here he stationed his army with the broad river between him and his foes. He then had about five or six thousand men, and here he awaited events in silence and somber gloom, yet always on the alert to seize any occasion to strike a blow where it would do most good or defend his wretched army from their powerful enemy. Never had the prospects of the colonies seemed so dark, and it may be doubted if they were ever again so dark. The British generals, as all their letters show, considered the war practically at an end. There might be a few more desultory fights, but the rebel army would rapidly dissolve. How sudden are the transitions of human affairs, how vain the pride of the haughty! In a few days the tide was suddenly to turn and events occur to make the banks of the Delaware immortal in song and story and pictorial art.

Parson Weems and His Histories. I had not been long in Washington when Parson Weems was pointed out to me as the author of "The Life of Washington." Young Virginia called him "Pappy" Weems, but to me the reverend little old gentleman was an object of especial veneration. Before I was old enough to read I used to cry over the incidents of the childhood of Washington as given in Weems' little volume, and read to me by my older brothers. George did not cut down the "fine old English cherry tree," but only "hacked" it with the new little hatchet of which his father had made him a present.

His confession—"Father, I cannot tell a lie; you know I cannot tell a lie; I did cut it with my hatchet"—sounds a trifle too heroic, yet far more true to nature, when it is known that at the south children and servants are still in the habit of saying of things they are forbidden to do, "I cannot do it," meaning that they are not permitted to do it. George never told a lie that we know of, but he could swear—under great provocation.

On the morning of the battle of Monmouth General Lee was under orders to attack the enemy at a certain hour, but he allowed the time to pass without obeying the order. An old soldier who was present told me that General Washington rode up and exclaimed, "By—General Lee, what does this mean?" I suppose that oath shared the fate of Uncle Toby's. The artist Mills, in his equestrian statue of Washington, seized the moment when he in his heroic rage dashed forward in advance of his staff to charge upon the enemy, leaving Lee to sulk at his leisure. After the battle of Monmouth Lee retired to merited obscurity.

The Monmouth incident proves that Washington, with all his Fabian caution, was, upon occasion, bold and daring, even to the verge of rashness. The incident of the wild, unbroken colt, that fell dead under him, is another illustration of his daring spirit, as well as his great physical strength, recalling to mind the taming of Bucephalus by Alexander the Great and the war horse which none but Caesar could mount. S. G. Dodge.

Washington's Inauguration.



Governor George Clinton was governor of New York eighteen years in succession, and as such had the honor of receiving President-elect Washington when the latter landed at New York, April 23, 1789.

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